

Submitter: Ann Turner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB238

Dear Chair Kropf and Esteemed Members of the Committee,

I strongly oppose SB 238A.

I am a retired physician, a member of Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility and a member of St. Andrew Catholic Church. I actively participate in peaceful rallies and protests that advocate for human rights, a livable climate, and a healthy democracy. Passage of this bill puts me and others standing up for social justice issues at risk.

SB 238A would allow law enforcement agencies to deploy drones in a wide variety of situations without a court warrant, and in large numbers.

Of particular concern is the fact that SB 238A will leave the decision to violate the privacy of Oregonians entirely in the hands of police and sheriffs. This means that law enforcement could use drones to surveil the lawful activities and everyday life of our communities with absolutely no judicial accountability.

We know that unchecked surveillance powers inevitably lead to its abuse: like monitoring, intimidating and silencing dissent - in particular targeting protestors, activists, and communities that are already over-policed.

In addition, there are no safeguards against drone data being shared with federal authorities. It could therefore be used by the Trump administration to target the very people he is increasingly harassing - including immigrants, refugees, people seeking reproductive or gender-affirming healthcare, and people speaking out against fascism.

At this moment, we are experiencing a rise in overt authoritarianism which seems poised to veer into outright fascism. SB 238A is the LAST thing Oregonians need right now.

Thank you,
Ann Turner, MD
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